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The Cause of the War

C. E. JEFFERSON

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THE CAUSE OF THE WAR

BOOKS BY DR. JEFFERSON

QUIET TALKS WITH EARNEST PEOPLE.
QUIET HINTS TO GROWING PREACHERS.
THE MINISTER AS PROPHET.
THE MINISTER AS SHEPHERD.
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THE CAUSE OF THE WAR

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IN NEW YORK CITY

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"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches."

—Rev. ii. 7.

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WHAT is the cause of the war?
It is the most important question to which any man or woman can just now turn his mind. No word has been of late so frequently on our lips as the word, Why. Men have asked one another in sad bewilderment, How does it happen that mankind has gotten into this deplorable predicament? How can you account for it that the nations of Europe have plunged into this abyss of blood and fire? How do you explain it that Christendom should bring upon the world this indescribable, unthinkable

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tragedy, this desolating and heart-breaking horror?

It is a question which will not down, and every one of us is under obligation to seek an answer. We cannot say, "I do not care what the cause of it is, I only want it to stop!" That is a lazy way out. We must not lay the blame on the country we happen to like the least. England lays the blame on Germany, and Germany lays the blame on Russia, and Russia lays the blame on Austria, and Austria lays the blame on Servia. That is an easy way out—too easy. We have no right to say, "It is too horrible to talk about; please let us think of something else!" Hundreds of thousands of our fellow beings are

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in the fire of a great tribulation, and we ought to come close enough to the flames for them to scorch our hearts. When so many of our brothers and sisters are in agony, it is base for us to turn our back upon them in their affliction. Moses one day saw what he thought was a bush on fire. He said, "I will turn aside and see this great sight." God spoke to him out of the fire. Shame on the man who is so stupid or selfish that he is unwilling to turn aside and ask himself why it is that a continent is blazing!

We owe it to ourselves and humanity to investigate the cause of the things that make havoc of human happiness and homes. Hundreds of men throughout the world are working day and

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night, seeking the cause of cancer, that implacable, deadly, pitiless enemy of mankind. Unless they find out the cause of it they can never hope to cure it. Only when the cause is found is it possible to hope for victory. War is the cancer of nations. It is just now eating into the vitals of nine of them. We must, if we can, find out the root cause of it, for only thus will it be possible to prevent the recurrence of a similar catastrophe.)

What do you think is the cause? Not chance. (The war did not come by accident. The boy that killed an archduke in the street of Serajevo did not create this war.) That crime was an episode which took place a few moments before the curtain went up. The

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great tragedy was staged by forces operating through many years. We are not living in a haphazard universe. Science has demonstrated that. Everything goes on according to law. Certain antecedents are followed by certain consequents; certain causes lead to certain results, certain seeds produce certain harvests. Wherever there is matter the same laws prevail. When we look through the microscope into the depths of the world of the infinitesimal, we find that all the atoms and ions are under the dominion of principles which not one of them can escape. When we gaze through the telescope, we find that all the blazing suns, and all the comets, too, and all the starry systems swing round their

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appointed orbits according to changeless law. Everything that takes place in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth, comes out of something that preceded it. Events move with the precision and orderliness of a military parade. There is a law in the universe of souls. Wherever there are minds, persons, moral beings, the same laws prevail. Human history is not a Babel of confusion. Human society is not a weltering chaos. Men and institutions are all under law. Certain causes produce corresponding effects, certain seeds unfold into inevitable harvests, everywhere and always. This war is not an accident. It was caused. Of this, we are certain. If there is a cause

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we must find it. What is the cause?

Is it fate? Is it due to an unescapable compulsion which lies in the nature of things? Is it an iron link in a terrible chain by which events are bound together? Did it have to come? Many men say yes. Professor Münsterberg says yes, and so does Professor Francke, and so does Professor Eucken, and so do many other men of less distinction. The idea of fate has always had a strange fascination for a certain type of mind. The human heart has long been haunted by the idea of an inexorable destiny. The pre-Christian world had, as you know, three goddesses who were called *Parcæ* or *Fates*, in whose awful hands the destinies of men were held. The early

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astrologers thought that human life was predetermined by movements of the stars. Out of those far-off orbs of light a subtle influence sifted down, determining the characters and careers of men. But against this idea of fate the human heart has persistently rebelled. To the sanest men it has long seemed a demoralizing superstition. Shakespeare, who had one of the soundest brains God ever put inside a human skull, is always jabbing it in his dramas. Listen to Cassius in *Julius Cæsar*:

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

or listen to Edmund in *King Lear*:
“This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in for-

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tune,—often the surfeit of our own behaviour,—we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars; as if we were villains by necessity, fools by heavenly compulsion, . . . and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on.” Samuel Johnson expressed the conviction of the honest and unspoiled heart when he said, “I know I am free, and that is the end of it.”

None of us, I presume, are fatalists in the realm of individual action, but many of us are fatalists when it comes to dealing with nations. Many men are just now talking about the inevitable clash between Slav and Teuton, the irrepressible conflict between two irreconcilable cultures. This war, they

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say, was bound to come. The cause of it lies in the very nature of things. The men who speak thus have not yet shaken themselves free from the entangling sophistries of the necessitarian philosophy. We Christians can never accept the idea of fate in the life either of individuals or nations. We are under bonds to hold fast to Paul's great declaration, that "God has made of one all the nations to live together on all the face of the earth, and has appointed them their established seasons and the bounds of their habitation." If individuals are free, then nations are free, for nations are composed of individuals. You cannot get fate by multiplying freedom into millions. This alleged irrepressible

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conflict is a figment of the imagination, the creation of a bewildered and belated mind. If a Slav and a Teuton in our city should load themselves down with deadly weapons, and should begin to fire at each other in the street, it would never do for them to set up the plea that this was an irrepressible conflict, that such a brawl was bound to come. The policeman would simply hustle them off to jail, and allow them to stay there till they came to their senses. We have no patience with such foolery as that in the realm of individual conduct. We should give it no quarter in the realm of international life. It is the excellent foppery of the philosophic world. This war is not the inexorable decree of fate. It is the

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result of the abuse of freedom. It is due to wrong ideals and wrong choices, wrong ways of thinking and wrong ways of feeling. It never would have come had it not been brought by the foolish and wicked thinking and action of men. Let us put the responsibility where it belongs. Do not saddle it on a fanciful scapegoat called Fate.

Why did the war come? Someone suggests that possibly God had something to do with it. Perhaps war is a part of the divine order, a feature of the system which the Almighty uses in educating mankind. It seems very harsh and cruel to us, but possibly it would not seem so if we could rise to a higher standpoint, and gain a wider outlook over the centuries. Is

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not the world built—men ask—on the idea of struggle, and is not war simply a phase of the age-long strife, which must be accepted as God's will for us? The survival of the fittest is a divine decree, and the fittest come to their own in war. It is thus that certain persons argue. Is God the cause, then, of this war? No! We Christians must reject that as unthinkable. Our God is the Father of Jesus Christ. His heart is a father's heart. He is infinite in tenderness, and pity, and compassion, and gentleness. He takes delight in mercy and forgiveness and kindness. He values even a sheep or a bird, much more does he value a man. He loves all men. It is his desire that all of them shall be filled

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with good will toward him and toward one another. Now, war is a device for settling international disputes by killing men, young men, the strongest young men, men who are sons, brothers, husbands, fathers. You cannot kill these without killing women, too, for when you kill their husbands, sons and brothers, their heart dies. They continue to exist, but they do not live. War is the most cruel, most heartless, most devilish instrument which the human mind can conceive of. Shall we say that it is the beneficent device of our Heavenly Father? Shall we say that it is his method of educating his children? Never say that! It is a lie, a monstrous lie. It is blasphemy, unpardonable blasphemy. You dare

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not say that! The man who says that, turns his back on the revelation of God's heart in Christ. He tramples on the message of the cross. He makes the Creator of the universe a devil. He takes away all the glory and bloom of living. These three things are certain: the war did not come by chance, it is not the decree of fate, the responsibility for it cannot be rolled upon God.

The blame then, apparently, must fall on the people. But what people? Are the peoples of Europe barbarians, lusting after slaughter? No, they are all amiable, industrious, quiet and peaceable. They love peace even more than we do, for they know better the value of it. Those of us who have

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traveled most widely through Europe know best the virtues and graces of all these nations. The British people are charming, as we all know, but the French people are not a whit less lovely. You cannot judge France by a few fops and harlots of Paris. One must get out into the smaller cities and towns to find out what the French really are. They are wondrously rich in the traits which the heart loves. The Germans are a noble and admirable people. They are not bellicose. We have millions of them in our own country, and no part of our population is more peaceable and law-abiding. The Germans in Germany—at least 65,000,000 out of the 66,000,000 of them—are as peace-loving as those

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living under our own flag. No one who has lived for a season in Germany and seen its beautiful home life, and enjoyed its gracious hospitality, could ever believe that this war came about because the German people wanted to fight. The Austrians also are fine. When Americans spend a summer in the Austrian Tyrol they come home saying, "The Austrians are just like ourselves!" That is the highest compliment it is possible for an American to pass on foreigners. And the Russians also are worthy of high praise. The upper classes in Russia have a cultivation and refinement equal to that found anywhere. They are not a semi-civilized horde which has made no progress since the times of Peter the Great.

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The masses of the peasants are, it is true, ignorant and superstitious, but they are not barbarians eager to kill. Their disposition is gentle and winsome, and Americans and Englishmen who have lived among them declare that in amiable traits they are not surpassed by any peasantry in the world. Dear, beautiful peoples of Europe! I always like best the nation I have visited last. It would be difficult to say which race is on the whole most lovable. We shall not roll the responsibility of this war upon any of them. Let us be careful in these trying days how we speak of them. It is impossible to bring a just indictment against a whole people. Let us not speak ever of the hypocritical English, or of the hysterical French,

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or of the conceited Germans, or of the insolent Austrians, or of the barbaric Russians, or of the semi-civilized Serbians. I have overheard, sometimes, in foreign countries, disparaging remarks about Americans, and I know how such words cut like knives and burn like fire. Let us keep our tongue off of all adjectives which stab and blister. We have representatives of all these nations in our midst, and we must beware of the sin of doing their countrymen injustice and giving them needless pain. This is not a peoples' war, and the peoples are not responsible for it.

But how does it happen, then, that all these people are fighting so furiously and enthusiastically? That is because they are all fighting in self-defense.

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We, too, would fight with ardor under similar circumstances. If our country were attacked, the most peaceable of us would seize a gun. The Servians were obliged to fight. When Austria lifted her mighty fist to strike, what could Serbia do but fight? And when the armies of the Czar began to move toward Vienna, what could Austrians do but fight? If they do not fight, their country will be torn limb from limb. When Russia prepared to strike Austria, Germany had reason to believe that the blow would fall also on her, because in time of war Austria and Germany are one. So that when the huge Russian army began to move, the Germans were compelled to rush to arms. There are only 66,000,000 Ger-

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mans, and 146,000,000 Russians, and Germany is fighting for her life. She has enemies not only on her east but on her southwest. In time of war Russia and France are one, and Germany had to strike France to escape being stabbed in the back while she was meeting the attack of her mighty eastern neighbor. There is not a soldier in the German army who does not believe he is fighting in defense of his fatherland. But France also is fighting in self-defense. She has received repeated admonitions as to what the next war between her and Germany would bring. Two years ago a member of the German General Staff informed the world in print that in the next war "France must be so completely crushed

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that she can never again come across Germany's path." Do you wonder that Frenchmen are fighting with desperation? But England is also fighting in self-defense. It is to be regretted that when Sir Edward Grey stated to the House of Commons the reasons why England must go into the war, he did not frankly present all the reasons. He named only two when he should have given three. The one he omitted is the deepest of all. England is in the war primarily because she had to defend herself. She could not in safety allow Germany to take possession of the coast of Belgium and the coast of France and plant her huge guns within a few miles of the English shore. Belgium is a shield which Eng-

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land holds over her heart to ward off a fatal shot from her continental foe. Mr. Churchill has frankly stated, since the war began, that the life of the British Empire is at stake. Every Britisher is fighting, then, in defense of his country. Even Russia feels that she is fighting in self-defense. At the very beginning, her secretary of foreign affairs, Mr. Sazanof, declared that it was a question of life or death for Russia whether Austria should be allowed to go on and crush Servia under her heel. Russia has a double motive for fighting. She is fighting for herself and also for others. She is fighting for the rights of a little country, which, when it had been bled white by two awful wars, was suddenly attacked by

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an empire fifteen times its size. You cannot wonder then that all these peoples are fighting. They fight not because they are barbarians or because they love war, but because they have been swept into war by forces which they were powerless to resist.

If it is not a peoples' war, it is possibly an Emperors' war. This is a claim confidently put forth. We are repeatedly informed that this is a dynastic war. The blame must be laid at the doors of the Hapsburgs and the Romanoffs and the Hohenzollerns. The war is the fruit of imperial ambitions. But is it? Which of the Emperors is guilty? Certainly not Franz-Joseph, an old man of eighty-four, tottering on the edge of the grave, a man

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whose wife and children met violent deaths, and whom no sorrow has spared, and whose one supreme desire, as he himself declared in his manifesto issued to his people at the outbreak of the war, was to spend the closing years of his life in peace. A man of eighty-four, broken by years and sorrows, is not likely to be consumed by dynastic ambitions. Where shall we look for the culprit? Hardly in Russia. Study the face of Nicholas II. It is not the face of a warrior. It is the face rather of an artist or a poet. Remember that it was he who, impressed by the argument of Jean de Bloch, called the first Hague conference some fifteen years ago, hoping that the nations might agree on a reduction in armaments.

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Read his last telegram to his cousin, the King of England, in which he declared that he had done everything in his power to avert the war. Surely this is not a man who wanted to deluge Europe in blood, or who is to be held responsible for what is now going on.

It would seem, then, that the criminal lives in Potsdam. He is the Kaiser. This is the conclusion which many Americans have arrived at. It is not surprising that they think as they do. There are numerous facts which have forced them to their decision. (For many years the Kaiser has shown a fondness for having his photograph taken in a spiked helmet, and an army overcoat, with his breast covered with

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military decorations. He has occasionally in his speeches rattled his sword in a way which has given his neighbors a great scare. He has taken evident delight in being the head of the mightiest army which was ever organized, and the chief of the second mightiest navy that ever sailed the seas.) Moreover, it was he who, when Austria issued her brutal ultimatum to Servia, declared through his ministers that no international conference could deal with the problem, and that Austria must be given a free hand in dealing with her troublesome neighbor. Finally it was he who declared war on Russia simply because that country was mobilizing. These five facts are not controverted by anybody, and they have led tens of

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thousands to hold the Kaiser responsible for the war.

But there are other facts which must be taken into account if we are to arrive at an equitable judgment. The Kaiser has, from the beginning of his reign to the present hour, declared himself a loyal friend of peace. He has repeatedly said that his supreme ambition is to have Germany take her rightful place in the world by the method of peaceful rivalry with her neighbors. One of his most memorable declarations is this: "If the peace of Europe lay in my hand, I should take good care that it should never be disturbed." Last July he sent one of his chaplains to attend the Church Peace Conference at Constance, and urged all

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theological students throughout Germany to do the same. His critics may say, "Ah, these are words!" But he has backed up his words with deeds. He has been on the throne for twenty-six years, and up to the first of last August he maintained peace with all the world. There has been more than one occasion on which it would have been easy to find a pretext for fighting, and on which some of his counselors have urged him to draw the sword, but he steadfastly resisted all such temptations, and nobly kept the peace. It might be said that this was nothing more than a shrewd diplomacy, and that the only reason why he has never fought before now was because that never before now was Germany alto-

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gether ready. But the fact remains that Germany, for twenty-six years, has maintained the peace, account for it as you may, and this fact is attended by a second fact, that the men who have come the nearest to the Kaiser have, whether Germans or Americans, been convinced that he is a true and steadfast friend of peace. No Americans, so far as I know, who have gotten close to the Kaiser, believe that he is an ogre, or a monster, or a heartless, conscienceless Napoleon, or a diabolical spider weaving his fatal web around the nations of Europe. They have found him an affable, versatile, gifted and noble-minded man, interested in music, art, and literature, full of fine feeling, with a soul dedicated to lofty

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ends. Mr. Alfred H. Fried, a winner of one of the Nobel prizes, after a careful study of the Kaiser's words and acts through twenty-five years, came to the conclusion that his rightful title is not War Lord, but Peace Lord of Europe. And Mr. Norman Angell, one of the most distinguished of our American peace workers, wrote a few years ago that those who consider the Kaiser a disturber of the peace of the world are speaking in ignorance of the character of the man. Before the present war began, the Kaiser's name was in the list of candidates for the Nobel peace prize of the current year, indicating how widespread in informed circles has been the impression that the Kaiser is a power for peace.

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“The sword has been forced into my hands,” so he said as he started his armies against Russia and France. He went into the war, he said, with profound regret. It pained him—so he asserted—to have the ancient friendship between Germany and Russia broken, and to find himself in arms against a nation so closely related to Germany as England. The entire German nation accepts these words as true. They stand by their Emperor with a unanimity which is almost unique in the history of nations. The great men of Germany, without a conspicuous exception, believe that this war was forced upon the Kaiser, and that he entered upon it because there was no honorable escape. All the

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scientists from Haeckel down, and all the philosophers from Eucken down, and all the theologians from Harnack down, believe just that. These are facts which must be faced by those desiring to arrive at the truth. We are inclined to ascribe to the Kaiser more power than any individual man is possessed of. It is absurd to think that a war of such vast dimensions could be caused by one man only. It would be horrible to believe that we are living in a universe in which one man by a solitary act can hurl the whole world into a pit of fire. (A Servian boy was the occasion and not the cause of the war between Austria and Servia, and so the Kaiser was the occasion but not the cause of the war between Germany and

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Russia.) The war was brought on by thousands of men working through thousands of days. We must find a cause large enough to account for the effect.

In what direction, then, shall we look for an answer to our question? It has been suggested many times that the root of the trouble lies in racial antipathies, and commercial rivalries, and religious differences. There is no doubt that all these exist. They are dangerous elements in the world's life, and are provocative of many troubles. But they did not cause the present war. These forces have in former times led to war, but they are not responsible for this one. All these mischief-making tendencies could have been checked and

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directed into the paths of peace by men of the right temper, working under a right policy. It is not a war in which religion cuts any figure. The Protestants of England are fighting by the side of the Free Thinkers of France, and the Catholics of France are shoulder to shoulder with the devotees of the Orthodox Greek Church. The bitterest things which are being said are said by Protestant Germans against Protestant Englishmen, and by Protestant Englishmen against Protestant Germans. Religious beliefs do not count for much in this war. Nor do racial antagonisms. It is preposterous to call it a conflict between the Teuton and the Slav. Englishmen are not Slavs, neither are Frenchmen, and yet

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Slavs and Englishmen and Frenchmen are bound together as by hoops of steel. Austria-Hungary has millions of Slavs, and yet those Slavs are fighting against Russia. Racial antagonisms have produced other wars, but not this one. As for commercial rivalry, there is only one such rivalry sufficiently fierce to be thought of for a moment as a possible cause of war, and that is between England and Germany. If that was the cause of the war, how did it happen that England came in at the end of the procession? She did not enter the contest until all Europe was ablaze. Commercial rivalries produce irritation, and lead sometimes to international complications, but they cannot be held responsible for the present tragedy.

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Six alleged causes have now been weighed in the balances and found wanting. Let me state what, in my judgment, is the fundamental cause. The war is the result of a false philosophy of national life, a philosophy which maintains that the foundation of all power is physical force, and that greatness is to be computed in terms of brute strength. It is a barbaric philosophy which has been dryen from one field to another because of the havoc it wrought, and we now see its operations in a realm in which it is working its ruin on a scale vast and appalling. Out of this philosophy there develops a policy—the policy of armed peace, the policy which bases peace on the fear which is inspired by deadly weapons.

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The policy was long tried in the realm of individual life. Men went daily armed to the teeth, to protect themselves against one another. The practice led to interminable brawls, and feuds, and duels, until at last it was given up. Only rowdies now carry knives and guns. The policy was then adopted by cities. Cities preserved the peace by arming themselves. Every city had its wall, its moat, its draw-bridges. Its armed forces were always held in leash ready for either defense or attack. The history of those days is a disgusting record of deadly rivalries, rapine, and slaughter. The policy was at last banished from the realm of interurban life. Cities situated within narrow limits bound themselves to-

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gether into leagues, and numerous small states took their place on the European map. These provinces adopted, however, the policy of armed peace, and the result was constant jealousies and bickerings and frequent bloody collisions. The little states grew sick at last of the exhausting strife, and rolled themselves into great states, which became known as world powers. But the old policy of armed peace, which the common sense of men had banished from the realm of individual, and interurban, and interprovincial life, was retained in the realm of international life. Men knew that little states could not wisely adopt it, but they supposed that large states could. They banished it from the ad-

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ministration of little powers, and retained it in the scheme of the great powers. The result is a great war. The war has come out of a false policy, and the false policy came out of a false philosophy. We are to seek, then, the cause of the present horror in the realm of ideas. It is sometimes asserted that it does not make any difference what you believe. The fact is that everything depends on what you believe. When men believe the truth, it is well with the world. When they believe error, darkness falls on the lands.

Let us look a moment at this philosophy. The modern name of it is militarism. Militarism has a creed with three articles. Article one asserts

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that war is a good thing. It has brought many blessings in the past. It will bring many more in the future. It is indispensable for national well-being. Without war, the virile virtues gradually decay, and the moral fiber of nations rots. This is the plain teaching of all modern militarists from von Moltke to von Bernhardi. Article second is a necessary deduction from the first. Since war is good and indispensable, and sure to come, because it lies in the structure of the great world plan, therefore the supreme duty of a nation is to be ready for it. Equip yourselves with all the necessary apparatus. You must lay in an enormous stock of guns and ammunition. You must have the latest weapons. Old

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weapons are valueless. You must buy the costliest of them, for only these are effective when the day of battle comes. No matter what the cost is, the nation must submit to it, even if it is compelled to mortgage the resources of generations yet unborn. But weapons are of no value unless men know how to use them. These modern instruments of blood are complicated, and they require a deal of practice. Therefore great masses of men must spend their life in drilling. They must practice constantly war games on the sea, and on the land, and in the air, for "Preparedness" is the one golden motto of a nation. The third article of the creed is that army and naval officials constitute a superior caste. They are the anointed

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custodians of the nation's honor, the divine guardians of the nation's treasures, the saviors of the nation's life. Therefore they are the safest counselors of diplomats, and the wisest advisers of presidents and kings. The whole doctrine is tersely put by a rear-admiral in our navy in an article published by him shortly before the opening of this war. The gist of his argument is as follows: The influence of an ambassador of any nation depends on the number and size of the guns behind him. It is by means of guns that a nation exerts pressure on its neighbors. This brings the naval officer into the realm of international diplomacy. He must stand by the side of the civil diplomat and assist him in his work. Indeed, he

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is the better man of the two, because of his superior training and his longer term of office, and, therefore, the officers of the United States navy are the only body of men on whom our Republic can continuously and safely rely. This is a very frank and modest statement of a militarist who is sure of the divine mission of the navy. Not all officers in our army and navy are militarists. Many of them, however, are, and the creed which they hold is the creed held by militarists the world over: War is good, be ready, and leave the direction of international business to us!

This is the creed of modern Europe. All the great nations have been brought little by little under the control of the

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General Staff. Every great potentate in Europe has had generals and admirals tagging at his heels. The war was born in the military oligarchies by which the rulers of Europe are hedged in. You cannot understand the diplomacy of Austria by making the acquaintance of Franz-Joseph. You must know Berchtold and Tisza, and, above all, Hoetzendorf and his staff! You cannot account for the diplomacy of Russia by studying the man who calls himself the autocrat of all the Russias. The Czar is held tight in the hands of a bureaucracy which holds all Russia in its grip, and to find the real rulers of Russia, you must go to the grand dukes and the counts, and especially to Grand Duke Nicholas

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Nicolaivitch and his staff! You will never understand the diplomacy of Germany until you get acquainted with Schellendorf and Frebonius, with von Bernhardi and von Koester, with Edelsheim and von Moltke, and von Tirpitz, and the other giants who stand round the Kaiser night and day. There are influential, able men in Germany beside the Kaiser. You must take into account that virile, ambitious, pushing crowd of thirty-one thousand officers of the German peace army, many of whom have for years amused themselves by gossiping about the joy of dictating terms of peace in Westminster Abbey, and by drinking toasts "to the Day" when the glory of

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Great Britain should be laid in the dust.

(Germany has been brought more and more under the dominion of the General Staff, but German militarism is not the only militarism in Europe, nor is it the oldest. There is a French militarism, very cocky, arrogant and brutal, as we all saw during the Dreyfus trial. There is a Russian militarism, very cocky, arrogant and brutal, as we had a chance to see in the Russo-Japanese war, when a gang of Russian robbers tried to steal Manchuria. There is a militarism in England, very cocky, arrogant and brutal, as the world saw a few years ago when Great Britain stole two South African Republics. Militarism, wherever you

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find it, is cocky, arrogant and brutal. It is everywhere and always the deadly and implacable enemy of mankind.

One of its fundamental principles is, "Strike first, and strike hard." That is the law of all militarists, and that, you observe, is the law of the jungle, it is the creed of the tiger. The tiger always leaps with the swiftness of lightning. Its victim must be crushed in the first attack. Militarism goes back to the jungle for its models. If you are settling disputes by reason, you can take time to consider and sift and weigh; if you are settling disputes by guns, you must be quick as a tiger. There is no time for reason.) One of the most appalling features of the opening of the war was the lack of

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time to consider. (Of the one hundred and fifty-nine telegrams and notes in the English White Papers, the one of greatest pathos is that of Sir Edward Grey to Sir Edward Goschen on August 1, "I still believe that it might be possible to secure peace if only a little respite in time can be gained." Time was the one thing essential, and, alas, there was no time to be gotten. The cavalrymen were all on their horses, and in an instant they were over the border. You have seen horses dash out of the engine house when the fire alarm struck. With just such swiftness dashed the armies of Europe into the arena of war. We are ready! That was the shout that went from mouth to mouth around the whole circle

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of nations. For forty years they had been preparing, standing each one in shining armor, and when the crisis came, there was no possibility of delay. For a generation the genius and the wealth of the nations had been expended on the apparatus of war. They had all prepared for war, and it came. It came easily. It came in spite of the efforts of the diplomats to hold it off. The machinery of peace had secured but scant attention, and it broke down under the strain of the fateful hour. The messengers of peace were just a little late all the way round the circle because the horses of war were on a gallop. One cannot read the White Papers of the various countries without being impressed by the fact that

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none of the ambassadors wanted this war. They were dragged into it because all the nations were lashed tight to their guns. When once the great masses of steel began to move, their momentum was irresistible. (From that instant Europe began to be ground to powder by the armaments she had created for preserving peace.)

(An awful crime has been committed against humanity. This crime has gone on through many years.) This war is retribution. It is the awful price which nations pay for doing wrong. All false principles have in them retributive forces which, when the time is ripe, explode, working immeasurable, unimaginable destruction. When the word came that war was at last inevit-

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able, some of us who have studied recent European history most carefully, and who knew best what such a war as this would involve, felt our strength going from us. We sat down horrified, stunned and dazed. Some of us could scarcely sleep. It all seemed like a hideous dream. It was all so needless, so foolish, so inexcusable, so crazy, that the soul cried out, "It cannot be, it must not be!" This feeling of horror was then swallowed up by the sense of helplessness, sheer, absolute, agonizing helplessness. There was no deliverance to be found in any quarter. We turned to the right and there was no deliverer there; to the left and he was not there. We went forward in search of some one strong enough to stay the plague, but

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we could not find him; we went backward and he was not there. There was no tribunal on the earth with authority that was adequate. There was no potentate in church or state strong enough to lay on the wild-dashing nations a restraining hand. There at The Hague stood the beautiful palace of peace, its gates closed and its oracles dumb. Beautiful white blossom of the world's hope, all shriveled in the hot breath of the coming storm! We turned to the heavens and there was no help there. God's arm seemed to be shortened so that he could not save, his ear seemed to be dull so that he could not hear. It is an awful experience to stand face to face with a world-wide calamity and

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feel that man cannot save and that God himself is impotent. There is a point beyond which the divine mercy does not act. For instance, a man is a thousand steps from the edge of a precipice. He walks steadily toward it. At every step in all the thousand steps he is free. He can turn back, or he can turn to the right or to the left, but if he takes the thousand and first forward step he is gone! Man cannot save him, God will not. We never pray that a man may not fall after he has begun to fall. A man is on the Niagara River several thousand yards above the falls—he has two stout arms and two strong oars. He drifts down the stream. At every moment up to a definite point, he can turn, if he chooses, to the shore. But

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he allows himself to drift six inches beyond that fatal point, and he is doomed. Man cannot save him, God will not. At a certain instant he passes beyond the realm of freedom, and enters into the realm of coercion. That is why the Bible says that it is an awful thing to fall into the hands of the living God—if you are doing wrong. We are in his hands all the time, but when we sin beyond a certain point, we fall into his hands in a different way. (On the first of August, 1914, Europe fell into the hands of the living God!)

Whatsoever a nation sows that shall it also reap. We sold slaves once in this country. Negro women were torn from their husbands and children, and good men stood by looking on uncon-

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cerned. Year after year the atrocity went on, and it seemed as though it might go on forever. Poor black woman, she could not protect herself, and there was no one else to protect her. And so one day there came a war. Nobody wanted it. It came. Lincoln tried to end it, but he could not. He tried again and again, and failed; and then at last the meaning of the war flashed upon him, and he bowed down his great soul before the Ruler of the world saying, "If every drop of blood drawn by the lash must be paid for by blood drawn by the sword, even then we must say the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." A distinguished American statesman long ago declared after pondering the vil-

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lainies of slavery, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just." Many a time in recent years have I trembled for Europe at the thought that God is just. When I have seen German women hitched up with dogs drawing carts through the streets of German cities while their sons were drilling; and when I have seen the miserable poverty of the Italian peasants, having little in their homes though they work industriously under one of the softest of skies, and in one of the most fertile of soils, the product of their industry being consumed by the army; and when I have looked into the hovels of the Russian peasants and have seen that nearly everything had been taken off the peasant's table, and

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nearly everything off the peasant's back in order that it might feed the army; and when I have stood at Ellis Island, and watched the incoming tide of Europe's poor, many of them trampled all out of shape under the heels of the war lords of their native lands, I have been absolutely certain that Europe would some day stand at God's judgment bar and render an account for its inhumanity. You can put a soldier on the back of every peasant grubbing in the fields. Poor peasant, he cannot help himself. You can increase the burden on him until his back is bent, and the light goes out of his eyes, and the hope dies out of his heart, but you must settle some day with God! That is what Europe is now doing—she

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is settling with God. You have seen a wonderful thing. You have seen the Almighty God cast a whole continent into hell.

Militarism is the absolute negation of Christianity. The one exhibits a mailed fist, the other shows you a hand that is pierced. The one carries a big stick, the other carries the cross on which the Prince of Glory died. The one declares that might makes right, the other affirms that right makes might. The one says that the foundation of all things is force, the other says that the foundation of all things is love. Militarism is materialism in its deadliest manifestation. It is atheism in its most brutal and blatant incarnation. It is the enemy of God and man. It

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must be overthrown. Every nation which becomes its devotee is doomed. Militaristic nations are broken to pieces like potter's vessels. So did the Almighty break Nineveh and Babylon, Persia, and Greece, and Rome, and so, unless they repent, will he break in fragments the so-called great powers of Europe. He will, if necessary, convert the capitals of our modern world into dust heaps like those of Thebes and Memphis, and begin the world anew. He will overturn and overturn, until he whose right it is, shall reign. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches—and to the nations!



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